30 September 2014 - Early Met Office figures show this is set to be the driest September across the UK since records began in 1910, with exceptionally low rainfall for many parts of the country.

It is also likely to finish in the top five warmest, with UK mean temperatures significantly above the monthly average.

Exceptionally low rainfall in September

Using figures from 1-28 September, the UK as a whole has received 19.4 mm of rain, which is just 20 % of the normal amount of rainfall we'd expect for the month. Prior to this, the driest September on record was 1959 with 23.8 mm.

Looking at individual countries, Northern Ireland should break the record for September dryness with only 6.5 mm of rain, just 7 % of the average. The previous record was set in 1986, with 9.7 mm. However, England, Wales and Scotland are likely to have their second driest September on record, with earlier records being set in 1959 (7.9 mm), 1959 (11.7 mm) and 1972 (31.7 mm) respectively.

Dry month in a wet year

This September follows on from the 8th wettest August on record and comes in a generally very wet year - this January to August is the wettest such period in the records, mainly as a result of the very wet start to the year and the wettest winter on record.

This is borne out by water levels around the UK. Trevor Bishop, Environment Agency deputy director of water resources, said: "Following the wettest January to August on record, water resources in England are around normal for the time of year.

"We also look ahead by modelling how rivers and groundwater may respond to different future rainfall patterns. The results show a broadly positive picture and even if rainfall is below average this autumn the country will not go into drought."

A top ten month for temperatures

The mean temperature for the UK so far has been 13.9 °C, which is 1.2 °C above the long-term average. This means it has been the joint 4th warmest September in the records back to 1910, but is well below the record of 15.2 °C set in 2006.

Sunshine amounts have been closer to average, with 94 % of what we would normally expect across the UK.

The dry and warm conditions this month have been caused by high pressure dominating our weather for much of the month.

This tends to block more unsettled weather heading in off the Atlantic, leaving the UK with fine, dry and fairly sunny weather at this time of the year.

Provisional Met Office statistics 1 - 28 September 2014 *

	Mean temperature (°C)		Sunshine (hrs)		Rainfall (mm)	
	Actual	Difference from 81-10 average	Actual	% of 81-10 average	Actual	% of 81-10 average
UK	13.9	1.2	116.8	94	19.4	20
England	14.8	1.1	123.3	90	13.5	19
Wales	14	1.1	144.4	113	11.9	10
Scotland	12.4	1.5	97.9	93	33.3	24
Northern Ireland	13.4	1.0	118.5	104	6.5	7

The table below shows the September records across the UK.

September records

	Mean temperature (°C)	Sunshine (hrs)	Rainfall (mm)
UK	15.2 (2006)	173 (1959)	19.4 (2014) *
England	16.5 (2006)	191.6 (1959)	7.9 (1959)
Wales	15.2 (2006)	197.3 (1959)	11.7 (1959)
Scotland	13.3 (2006)	141.6 (1959)	31.7 (1972)
Northern Ireland	14.2 (2006)	164.4 (1991)	6.5 (2014) *

*These are provisional figures from 1 - 28 September 2014 and could change after the rainfall for the last two days of the month is included and final quality control checks on data have been made.

A full summary of the weather this month will be available on the Met Office website early in October.

Last updated: 29 September 2014